

Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge

July 21 – 27, 2013 [Issue 11]

Inside This Issue

- 1 Message from Monomoy
- 1 2013 Field Season Update
- 1 Bird Sightings
- 2 Bird Activity
- 2 Staging Counts
- 2 Northeastern Beach Tiger Beetle
- 2 Hybridization of *Ammodramus* Sparrows
- 2 Predator Removal and Invasive Species Control

Photo of the Week



Photo Credit: USFWS/Ravin Thomasson

Message from Monomoy

Migrants are on the move and chicks are fledging! Please be mindful and respectful of posted areas as many of our breeding birds still have cryptic colored chicks! Be on the lookout for staging shorebirds, but please do not disturb them. Many of these birds have flown long distances and are in need of rest. Stay tuned for exciting bird sightings, who knows what may come to our shores.

2013 Field Season Update

This is a weekly synopsis of biological activities on South Monomoy, North Monomoy, and Minimoy Islands. Information within this report is subject to change. For up to date information, please contact Refuge Staff.

Bird Sightings

American crow	Red-winged blackbird
Double-crested cormorant	Black-bellied plover
Dunlin	Willet
Ruddy turnstone	Laughing gull
Great black-backed gull	Herring gull
Northern harrier	Snowy owl
Short-billed dowitcher	Black-crowned night-heron
Great egret	Snowy egret
Thick-billed murre	Turkey vulture
Osprey	Black skimmer
Yellow-crowned night-heron	Glossy ibis
Parasitic Jaeger	Redknots
American Bittern	Peregrine Falcon

Bird Activity

Piping Plovers (PIPL)

Currently there are 16 active nests/broods (2 actual nests). Currently there are 29 chicks with 9 reaching fledged status. The North Monomoy Island PIPL brood was not seen during nest checks this week. More information will be provided once available.

American Oystercatchers (AMOY)

A total of 19 chicks have fledged from Monomoy NWR barrier islands during 2013. Two chicks, 1 from Minimoy and 1 from North Monomoy Island, are estimated to reach fledging status next week. Staff will continue to monitor all islands for fledglings and conduct resights in the upcoming week. More information will be provided once available.

Common Terns (COTE)

Only 15 plots remain with chicks less than 15 days old and/or nests. Staff continues removing plots with fledged chicks and/or chicks older than 23 days. Klepto-parasitism and night stints are being conducted as staff time allows. More information will be provided once available.

Roseate Terns (ROST)

No new information to report. 12 ROST chicks have hatched, 6 of these have fledged, 3 remain unfledged, and 3 have not been found recently. ROST chicks become very difficult to locate as they grow older and are more mobile. More information will be provided once available.

Black Skimmers (BSLK)

BSLK pair has been observed on the flats on the north tip of South Monomoy Island. BSLK have not been confirmed as nesting on the refuge.

Least Terns (LETE)

Many LETE chicks are fledging and can be seen flying around the main nesting areas. Productivity for LETE seems to be qualitatively good this year. More information will be provided once available.

Staging Counts

The entire northeast population of Roseate Terns stage on the Cape and Islands prior to migrating to Central and South America. Our staging tern counts document the relative importance of Monomoy Refuge to other sites and record change in use over time. Staff attended ROST and COTE staging count training this week to update color

band usage and refresh their tern identification skills.

Northeastern Beach Tiger Beetle (NBTB)

NBTB appear to have been successfully established on Monomoy NWR as a result of 4 years of introduction efforts (2000 through 2003). Annual counts help document annual increases in the population. Staff conducted surveys on 22 July on South Monomoy's eastern shoreline, counting a total of 2010 beetles from the lighthouse trail to the new break on South Beach.

Investigations of Interspecific Hybridization in Ammodramus Sparrows

This project seeks to examine the extent and impact of interspecific hybridization between the Saltmarsh and Nelson's Sparrows which co-occur in tidal marshes from southern Maine to northern Massachusetts. Prior research documented hybridization, and suggested hybrids may occur wherever they are sympatric. Hybridization, therefore, may be an additional threat to the persistence of these vulnerable species. This study, part of a regional tidal marsh bird conservation and monitoring initiative (SHARP), looks to increase understanding of the dynamics of this hybrid zone through DNA sampling and observation systematically throughout the overlap zone and surrounding allopatric populations. On 23 July staff assisted Jen Walsh, a University of New Hampshire PhD candidate, in capturing 12 Saltmarsh Sparrows 1 Juvenile, and 11 adults. Blood samples collected will undergo DNA sequencing this fall.

Predator Removal and Invasive Species Control

Non – native and species permitted for take are removed from our islands when evidence shows disturbance and predation to nesting birds on islands.

No night stints were conducted this week.

JULY 2013						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
30	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			